
Ecology & Parks Committee

HB 1984

Brief Description: Authorizing the use of a safe alternative refrigerant in motor vehicle air conditioning equipment.

Sponsors: Representatives Finn, Armstrong, Upthegrove and Wood.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the use of an alternative refrigerant in motor vehicle air-conditioning equipment if the refrigerant is included in the list of safe alternative motor vehicle air-conditioning substitutes for chlorofluorocarbon-12 published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Hearing Date: 2/17/09

Staff: Anna Jackson (786-7190)

Background:

Air-Conditioning Equipment

"Air-conditioning equipment" is defined in statute as mechanical vapor compression refrigeration equipment that is used to cool the driver's or passenger compartment of any motor vehicle [RCW 46.37.470(1)]. Currently, it is illegal for air-conditioning equipment to contain any refrigerant that is toxic or flammable [RCW 46.37.470(2)].

Federal Significant New Alternatives Policy

The federal Clean Air Act provides for the review of alternatives to ozone-depleting substances and the approval of substitutes that do not present a more significant risk than other available alternatives. Similarly, federal law requires that to the maximum extent practicable, certain substances must be replaced by chemicals, product substitutes, or alternative manufacturing processes that reduce overall risks to human health and the environment [42 U.S.C. 7671k(a)].

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

This policy is known as the Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP). Under the SNAP, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to publish a list of prohibited substitutes for specific uses, as well as safe alternatives identified for specific uses. Pursuant to its authority under the SNAP, the EPA promulgated a rule in 2008 that permits the use of a substitute for motor vehicle air-conditioning substances that is a non ozone-depleting gas.

Summary of Bill:

Alternative refrigerants may be used in motor vehicle air-conditioning equipment if the refrigerant is included in the list of safe alternative motor vehicle air-conditioning substitutes for chlorofluorocarbon-12 published by the EPA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.